

## **Friends For Guinea Pigs**

By Stan Lee Smith

Have you ever wanted to move to Switzerland and own one guinea pig? Well, you can't. It is actually illegal. According to pet-friendly laws in Switzerland, you must own at least two guinea pigs at a time. This law was a part of a 2008 legislative push to grant social rights to animals who tend to get lonely on their own. Owning only one guinea pig is even considered to be animal abuse.

Guinea pigs are very social animals and need to be with others of their species to be happy. That is exactly why this animal rights law was passed in 2008. This law does not just apply to guinea pigs though. In Switzerland, you must also make sure your goldfish and parrots have companions. Considering it is very unlikely to have both your guinea pigs die at the same time, this could be a confusing legal situation. Due to this issue, there are many guinea pig matchmakers. These are people who help pair your guinea pig with a new friend and make sure they get along which makes the process a little bit easier for them since these animals can tend to be picky with who they live with. Rent-a-guinea pig services have also come about. They might not be as personalized, but they still will provide you with a new friend for your pet, if its original companion has passed away.

In my opinion, I think more countries should start implementing laws such as this one. It is only fair to these animals to be able to live as long and as happy of a life as they can. It is unethical to deprive an animal of basic needs, and for guinea pigs, one of their basic needs is companionship. It only makes sense to make sure while these animals are confined in such small spaces, we provide them with all their needs. Just like you could imagine yourself going insane living in a house alone for years, imagine how it feels for a guinea pig having none other of their kind around them.

Thanks to Switzerland, guinea pigs will now start to live more fulfilled lives. Animal rights are starting to expand and become more prominent in more counties, and I couldn't be happier about it. I hope to see more of this across the world and watch as animals' quality of lives get better and better.

**Word Count:** 405

## The Power of Wind

By Mr. Monsen

Imagine driving along a mind-numbingly straight road where all there is to see for hundreds of miles are corn fields and... wind turbines. Doesn't sound like a likely match, but the Midwest states of the United States have made this pairing a common sight along many highways and backroads that intersect our nation's heartland.



Wind turbines have become a useful tool for creating energy, while many still complain about their ugly presence ruining the natural beauty of a landscape. These turbines create a form of energy called Wind Energy. Considered too unpredictable by many, too difficult to manage, and too costly to set up, wind turbines harness wind energy that is actually created by the sun. Solar radiation unevenly heats the Earth's surface, causing hot air to rise and cool air to replace it. As a result, you get wind and wind energy. Someone came up with the idea of creating these "turbines", which look like huge rotating fans, and putting them around the country, mostly in the Midwest and West, where winds are more prevalent, to create a renewable source of "clean" energy for our world.

There are many benefits to wind energy. The two most important benefits are the facts that wind energy is a green energy source (no pollution) and it's renewable (never runs out). That alone should be enough. However, as with anything new and different, there are opposing opinions, and some people think wind energy isn't worth the effort. Many think wind is too unpredictable and the cost to set up the turbines is too much. Some even feel that the threat to wildlife, particularly birds and other flying creatures, that comes with these turbines means we shouldn't even consider using them.

On one hand, I personally think wind energy is a great idea, especially because of its ability to reduce pollution in our world. On the other hand, I don't know if I'm ready to look at these wind turbines sitting in the Atlantic Ocean off our Long Island beaches, as has been proposed for years now. I feel very selfish for even saying that too. With that in mind, I do believe that wind energy will make its way into our society over the next twenty or so years. The United States aims to produce at least 20 percent of its electricity by wind power by 2030, so I guess we have no choice.

One wind turbine can generate enough electricity to power 600 U.S. homes. They may not be pleasing to the eye, but their advantages can't be denied. The next time I am driving through Iowa's cornfields and I see wind turbines filling the scenery, I will think to myself, maybe they are worth a try.

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